Tracy,

today I felt love for the first time. 9:30AM, Tustin California, July 16th 1999, my heart pounded, I couldn't breath. I felt like electricity was running through me. Shona Phillips said she can't stop thinking about me. In the shower I sang along with your tape - and breath my wings, One day, missing you, and herd. I laughed and I cried. The elation has worn off a little cos I don know what happens next. There's 2 others in our room, and she's in a relationship but god ... intimacy. At last. I never new life could feel this good "One day maybe you will see the stars touch skin with sand."!

July 17th. Yesterday was the best day of my life. Just looking at Shana takes my breath away. Touching her ... it's like nothing I've ever experienced. Better than chocolate! I feel awake. All those years were worth while for these brief moments. "Brief is life but love is long." "The heart aches only to that which aches in return." It's kinda like Titanic. I don't want to let go. What can I do? She can't stay. Can I follow her to Fresno? Forget about New York? Do you know how I feel? It's like everything is irrelevant now but me and her. Money, work, family, home ... none of it matters to me when I'm with her. And it's killing me that we can't be together enough, cos the others can't find out. I don't want to ruin her relationship cos

I guess it's inevitable that I go back to Iceland, and I don't want her to be alone. It hurts to look at her. The depth of my feeling continues to amaze me.

What an amazing week. I'm sitting here beside a pool in Tustin, California, and the one I love more than anyone or anything is in our motel room. But it's a bittersweet symphony. I laughed and cried in the shower. Our moments together will be so brief. It's so fucking painful having to pretend we're just friends when all I want to do is touch her.

Last night was like a dream. Even now it brings tears to my eyes. The Concert... that wonderful beautiful music of Sarah Brightman. Listen to the tape!!! and every word coming from my heart, and just us two sharing, kissing, touching... Oh god, tomorrow

So goes Tracy, these are the moments that make life worthwhile. Lightening struck, and I still feel the surges of power everytime I touch her. Even last night, in the motel room, the others were asleep, we just stared into each others eyes and touched hands. I miss her when we're in the same room, what will I be like tomorrow? "The day breaks not, it is my heart." She's brought new meaning to all those songs - poems - films about love. Now I know what it's like to have my breath taken away by a look, to look into someone's eyes and feel whole, to be in the arms of an angel, to be suffocated by love, love ...

Do you know how I feel? I can't put it into words? I've nothing to compare it to really. Is this my one chance? Will lightening strike again? I miss her already.

Dearest Tracy,

Now, talk about living a dream. Wednesday evening I flew here + saw Shona and wanted her. Thursday I wanted her more. Friday I wanted her so much it hurt and she finally cracked the truth from me, and then admitted she couldn't stop thinking about me. But day was now. Bittersweet. The sweetest moments were at the concert. I'll be able to relive those moments through the music. And that night. Touching. And Saturday, in the beachside town of Newport, California. Amazing. After all those days being jealous of couples, I finally felt it. We got this wonderful photo taken which I hope to copy and send you. That night was tough, realising that she had to go. She cried and said she didn't want to hurt me. After, the town was wonderful. Walking out by the freeway. We stayed out all night cos we couldn't be together in the motel. She's familiar to me. When I'm with her I feel so comfortable, all my

worries fade except the occasional realisation that I have to go home.

I couldn't let her go. I was supposed to accompany her to the airport, but I ended up accompanying her to Fresno. I came home with her. I need to be with her for as long as possible. So here I am in Fresno California, living a dream, feeling happier than I ever dreamed I would. New York is irrelevant, relatives, sightseeing, whatever. All that matters is her. Seeing touching breathing her. This is heaven. As long as I can ignore the complications. If only life was simpler...

Well, I've got 2 weeks of heaven left. The past few days have been the longest and most wonderful of my life. I'm almost speechless! She's asleep ~ I feel a warm surge just by realising that. Wow. This was worth waiting for ~ a quote from Sarah McLachlan: "I will remember you, will you remember me? Don't let your life pass you by, weep not for the memories."

Complications - She's torn between 2 lovers. We've shed a lot of tears over the complications. I don't want her to hurt him either, because he obviously loves her as much as I do. I read an email from him and it made me cry. She tells me she loves me tregovethy now. Which is nice. The o the complication would be that I have to go home on August 4th.

We went to the cinema today, so there I was making out during puppets from Space and Austin Powers 2. Oh, and I broke down crying at the end of puppets from space, cos there was an emotional leaving scene. Anyways, the theory is that we live in the moment and enjoy each other's company for 2 weeks. Then she'll make her decision. Hmmm. I love being here. Just BEING with Shona. And how... physically it's wonderful too. I did it. She was so amazingly considerate and caring. I'm glad I waited. I find myself wondering what I've done to deserve this almost constant joy...

Well Tracy, I'm hoping to finally reach a mailbox tomorrow! So yeah, I'll have to finish this soon.

Well, I'm finally getting all my arrangements changed. Gotta get a plane to San Diego + the Sandiego - NY on Aug 2nd to fly home Aug 4th. I am having such a time here. I do love to. I guess I'll find out how much when I finally leave. But till then there's 2 weeks! Of happiness and togetherness and comfort and love and awakening and exploration. This is exactly the holiday I needed! This letter's been weird cos it's written in bits + pieces y'know. Basically I'm with Shona constantly unless she's in the bathroom or on the phone or something! Which is when I grab this paper + pen to stop myself dwelling on complications. I'm doing

Um, I love being with her. I don't think I'll regret this cos there so many happy moments. Plus I'm learning. Good, I'm learning! True love? When I'm with her I think so. But then when I'm thinking clearly I realise how little I know about her and stuff. It's emotional. & emotional. I can't get enough of her. Plus little things. Breathing her. Gazing into her eyes. I love it here. What a holiday?!

Hey. Well, now it's Tuesday night after midnight. I've been here nearly a week. Shona and I actually talked today and I feel even closer to her. I can't get enough of her. Even now, writing

this, I'm aching for her. Leaving will be so hard, but I can't think about that now.

She was so caring that night. My first time. I wasn't very good and it could have been awful but she was so kind and helpful and tender and wonderful. Several times a day I find myself wondering what I've done to deserve this. I'm a hopeless romantic as you know, but this exceeds everything I dared hope. It's better than in movies or TV. I feel more than I ever have. And she cares for me so much ... I could cry. I love.

I hope I've explained this well.

" I've had the time of my life and I've never felt this way before."

" Then I saw her face, now I'm a believer. Not a trace of doubt in my mind ... "

I know love, and I am so happy. Now.

Brenden

Shona Philips

Shona is almost 27 years old. She's beautiful, with dark hair and these big brown eyes I find myself drowning in... I got to like her through Email cos we've got a lot in common. She doesn't go out, mainly cos her mother (even more protective than mine!) won't let her, and instead she has friends online. She doesn't have a job either. Her mother's philosophy seems to be "Why send her out into the big bad world before I have to?" So yeah, like me, her closest friends are people she knows through the Net. She's aimless, like I used to be, but she says she's happy...

My feelings for her.... well to be honest I guess it was lust at first sight! Her skin was so tanned - smooth... even now, just a look can have a big effect on me! Being in the same hotel room, we got to spend some

live together. She's cute and funny and smart and kind. I thought it was the same old story, and she wasn't interested in me, and I felt so elated that she was feeling the same as me. She's so fucking special, and she makes me feel special too. This is the first time I've felt lovable I guess. I hope I never forget these moments. So much feeling.

It's strange ... I liked her before I met her. I remember when I heard that she and Jonathan had gotten together I actually sat down and cried for the first time this year. I guess I'd been hoping for something - I felt so empty. I made myself feel better by telling myself I wouldn't be heartbroken to hear if something happened between us. I'm so naive. Something happened anyway. Something so special and wonderful it fills me with joy. She's completed me. Sometimes, I wonder if this is a dream. It is.

Brendan.

21/7/99

Ugh Tracy,
Why does life have to be so complicated - confusing. I sent my love filled letter yesterday and it's like suddenly everything changed. I'm beginning to realise all I feel is about feeling. About hormones - emotions. It's not really love is it? I just love being in the luv. It's so annoying.

Plus the complications are getting more complicated. She talks to her boyfriend on the and it hurts. Jealousy and guilt in equal measure. Plus I don't wanna hurt her in any way. I'm feeling too much today. Everything's fine when I'm in luv arms just being, but then we think and talk and stuff. Complications ...

Shit she's on the phone to him now and it's suffocating me. I'm the adulteress I should be here, damnit. But

then she tells me she needs me here.
But she's alone, that if her relationship
was perfect she wouldn't need me. Basically,
it's still the 2 week test thing, but I've
convinced myself I don't love her, not really
You know. I care about her. I want her, I
need her ... but love? Aah! I'm not
supposed to feel like this. I'm so selfish.
Maybe it's 2 much. In one week, we've
gone through the attraction, the wonderful first
dates, the torrid tenderness, the getting to
know each other, the feeling close and close until
today ... the doubt. I don't know.
I know I love being with her. I know I
don't want to hurt her. I know I don't want
to cause future misery for myself. But
I don't know what I should do. Leave? I
can't. I'm glad I didn't leave cos I need to
resolve this so I don't torture myself unnecessarily
in the future. Anyway ...

Tracy, I'm on this rollercoaster of emotions. It's getting too complicated. The others saw us, and one in particular is suggesting that we tell Jonathan. More tears, cos she doesn't wanna hurt him. And she doesn't wanna hurt me. She feels too much. So let's try to sort things out.

I know I love her and I feel she loves me. I will never regret these days because I'm awake at last. I'll want her. I'll miss her. I'll forever wonder what could have been, but I won't regret. Unless it causes them to break up. I don't think I could forgive myself for that. I hate hurting people, and this pain... I couldn't live with myself. I hate seeing her cry and knowing it's

because of me... But I love being with her so much. I... I don't know what this is going to do to me. It seems inevitable that she + jonathon remain a couple and I get left behind. I'm roadkill. Aaaaaagh. I feel so happy when we can be happy together, but this... it's killing me.

Sigh The wild ride is over and I'm on the ground again. She loves him more than me. Everything I've felt this week reduced to the same ole story. She simply doesn't love me enough. Or something. I was so happy... She says nothing's changed except there'll be no more sex stuff. For me it's a hope dashed. Another dead end, but this road had been bright and I'd already travelled so far on it. And now I have to turn back.

Hope, Rollercoaster's still going. I can't keep my hands off her. So she said we should do what we want to for now and then go back to our lives.

I still feel guilty for changing the relationship. Right now others who saw us are urging her to tell Jonathan. I'm the adultress. Plus my image in their eyes is not fucking good. I mean, Shana's there saying how sorry she is, but I can't say anything - they all think I'm a heartless bastard. I've lost friendships. They just won't be the same when I get back. Damnit, so hot and fair a day I have not seen.

I almost ran my own tanks - no drive. I guess I'll be again tomorrow. I need to hear your voice. I'm forgetting who I am. I'm thinking of going to Key or Wakulla instead. I need some chilling out time. Or something. Q

She's gone tell him. She cried. I said I'm sorry and she said "I shouldn't have let this happen" and I said 'this' has made me like warthabit and she said "he makes me like warthahib" and I feel like shit. I shouldn't be me. But I can't even contemplate leaving without feeling so fucking empty. I'll miss her so much. She doesn't want to hurt me. She's already upset about the hurting her boyfriend, and I'm trying so hard not to show how hurt I am. That 'this' is reduced to the same ole story. I want to be with her, but she wants to be with someone else. I'm suffocating. My heart is pending.

Yay! It's over. She told her boyfriend and he was so damn understanding I can't even think of intruding on their relationship any further. So that's it. We're friends. I've sent a letter of apology

to her boyfriend. I'm actually jealous of her now cos he's such a good man. She deserves that.

For me, I feel the impending loneliness strongly. I feel twinges of despair, thinking how desolate my life is compared to this fulfilling experience. I've made a vital friend but god, she's 6,000 miles away. I need hugs & stuff. But I've learned so much. Maybe I'll be able to open up more, now that I know how good it can feel.

Will you look after these letters please? They're my only record of what happened here. The best of times... I pray that I can be positive and not return to familiar self-pity. Crying myself to sleep wishing for something that can not be. Accept your life, do what U can with it and be happy. Or I could move to Africa. Hmm...!

Ohhh! Only 2 days left here. His for the last. I have to see my relations & I need to experience New York B4 I go home. Shane and I are still doing the friends in lust thing as far as I can see. This has been the most important experience of my life I think. I experienced love & made a close friend - hopefully I'll have more confidence from my experience. I'm a horny little bastard apparently. I wonder how I'll be when I get home. I hope this experience will make me a better man. Wow. I spent $400 for these precious days. I don't think I'll ever regret it. I haven't ruined his life. I don't think I'll be sad for long. And I have experience + memories + friendship...

"Sigh" She's talking to him again. I feel alone already ... oh well, New York should be fun. So... today we went to the mall - I bought hairings a cards - stuff, then we saw Nero Bear kissed Cooper!) and Entrepreneur. Nero Bear kissed was cool!!! I saw it like 11 days ago and I was thinking "poor me, I'll never really kiss" and now it's like "woh, I'm there. From a pathetic virgin to a horny little bastard" It's so cool (☺) - Shana said Usually she cries during those sappy films but today she didn't. And I said me too, but I was thinking of you and you was thinking of someone else - she said "I was thinking of both of you" which was nice.

We did this love test thing
I was rated 10/10 - Out of
Control !!! And she was
rated 7/10 - Serious. How -
So true.
God, I still can't contemplate how
I'll feel leaving her, leaving here.
So yeah, we didn't pay much attention
to the movie!
But now she's on the phone
with him ... it's such a weird situation.
I mean I tell myself we're friends
but I can't resist her - she
tells me she doesn't mind so yeah
I'm a horny little bastard. South
Park was so fucking brilliant!
I still feel jealous and guilty. All
I can do is hope I find another
special person soon. Iguess !!!
be more open now. Or something!

Her online nickname is Sunshine.
The day we got together, and the
'listee' gave me a tape she'd made
with several fitting songs on it
including 'Steal my sunshine'. We
heard the same song next day in a
movie called Go! And then...
now, my last day here, the
first time she's heard this song on the
radio. Steal my sunshine.
Oh cruel fate. Obviously I'm
feeling like shit at the moment.
I spent $650 for this little detour
in plan tickets - date changes - stuff.
In pursuit of true love. Maybe
the value of these memories will increase
with age but for now god, so much money,
& she chooses him - I get to sit
suffocating while she talks to him.
I also get a muddy name among my friends

I act an uncertain future - happy or sad, hope or despair?
Have I lost more than I've gained?
I don't want to regret her, to reset her.
I hope I won't.
I can't think of New York. I should be planning 'cos I'm leaving to Roma but I can't contemplate it.
I think I'm gonna end this letter to keep you up to date.
My saga is almost over. The longest 2 weeks of my life. So much has changed ...
Now we're gonna go see Tarzan!
This is it, the last day ...
I feel drained and tired and sad, but I hope. That I'll learn from this experience, that I'll be better, and happier, and more open. It's been an exhilerating and educational experience!
Brendan